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## MCRP Community Planning Graduate Studio 2005/06

### King City Community Plan

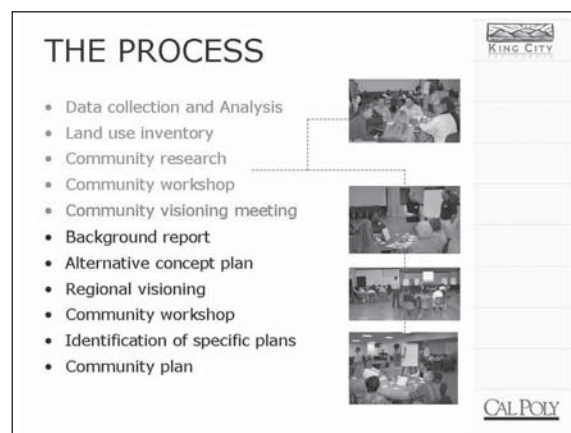
*During the current academic year, the City and Regional Planning Department graduate Community Planning Studio is engaged in important community-outreach that will make a difference in King City CA. Nuworsoo and Topping, the class instructors, resume the studio's pedagogy and do a brief discussion of the process and progress of this year's work in King City. In next year's issue, FOCUS will publish the final results of this important studio.*

The community planning studios are organized in a sequence of two one quarter-long classes. They are designed to provide a bridge between theoretical knowledge about planning principles and techniques and the application of this knowledge to "real life" planning situations. This is accomplished by engaging the students in community-based projects which provide opportunities for working with the residents, staff and government officials throughout all stages of the planning process. To provide an added dimension of reality, the studio work scope is structured to simulate the planning process following the procedures and guidelines established by the planning laws of the state of California.

The studio project for this academic year focuses on the community of King City in southern Monterey County.<sup>1</sup> It serves as a case study in an investigation of how a rapidly growing community could optimize its growth potential. The overall goal is to prepare a Community Plan which will assist the County staff in guiding future development in King City and create optimum levels of services, economic activities and quality of life for the community residents and visitors. King City is a relatively small community of 11,100 people (2000 Census) located on the Central Coast of California. Its population grew rapidly by nearly a third between 1990 and 2000 with 80% of its inhabitants claiming Hispanic or Latino ancestry. The agricultural sector employs the greatest percentage of King City workers (37.8%) with education and social services a distant second (11%). It has a higher percentage of families with incomes below the poverty level than the US average. King City is confronted with important challenges that need to be addressed in order to accommodate the anticipated population increase and minimize negative impacts of growth. These challenges include addressing the high cost of housing, shortage of workforce housing and the dangers of traffic congestion, sprawl and the degradation of natural resources.

<sup>1</sup> Note from *FOCUS*: see the first article in this Student Work section by Liberto-Blanch.

Last Fall Quarter, the first phase of this planning project was devoted to collecting background information needed to develop the community plan. The work effort included review of secondary data sources, informant interviews, land use inventory and community meetings. The first meeting was held in the form of focus groups in the county fair grounds facility on October 27, 2005. Another one was held in Council chambers on November 17, 2005 to report findings to date and the emerging directions with regard to community aspirations indicated by the information gathered.



Figures 1 & 2: Top, a slide from the presentation the class did at the community visioning workshop when explaining the planning process. Bottom, a community workshop.

In his article “Cal Poly project takes on King City’s general plan” published by the *King City Rustler*, Marc Leblanc noted that “King City Councilman Jeff Pereira was one of many council members that attended the community planning meeting” on October 27th. He reported the following:

“The evening was the first of four scheduled meetings between 17 California Polytechnic graduate students and King City residents. The students’ goal was to take the first step into helping King City draft an advisory document to the city’s existing general plan. It is a report that will guide the city’s growth and development for years to come.

Advised by experienced Cal Poly faculty and guided by the residents of King City, the students will work for approximately five months drafting the community plan that will focus on issues such as safety, noise, housing, conservation, economics, and sense of community. According to the students’ flyer, ‘The community plan is something like a general plan in that it is modeled after these elements, just in somewhat less detail, and in a more advisory capacity’.”

The study team is pleased to note that community leaders, city officials and the public at large have received their work with high commendation. The background information

is compiled into a draft report to serve the remainder of the studio project and subsequent other planning tasks. The report is organized in chapters to correspond with the mandatory and optional elements of a General Plan. Each chapter contains descriptive text with tables, charts, maps and pictures as appropriate. In addition, a large collection of GIS files and related data resides on the departmental server. The electronic files include base maps, various shape files, land use inventory, miscellaneous data on soils and other natural resources.

This Winter Quarter, the study team proceeds in collaboration with the community to develop a community vision; goals and objectives; policies, program and projects. A land use allocation procedure will be employed to formulate alternative future development scenarios. Two other community meetings are planned. One will engage the community in the alternatives development process and the other is to present findings. The final product will be a draft community plan that addresses the mandatory and optional elements of the City’s General Plan. The background report and community plan document will provide a foundation for updating the existing General Plan.

Figure 3:  
King City at a glance. The  
existing land use map  
produced by the students for  
the visioning workshop.

